

Martin's keeping a weather eye on us

■ IT'S May 2 as I write this, and some better weather finally seems to have arrived – although the May Day bank holiday was the big wash out it usually is! You may think I am a bit preoccupied with the weather, but it's an occupational hazard for an area coordinator. By the time you read this, the Spring National Rally will have come and gone and hopefully we will have all gone topless, but without the woolly hats and scarves. MARTIN

Ady's long running challenge is over

■ Yes, he made it! Eastern Region member Adrian Neill completed the 2006 London marathon on April 23. After a good start, a knee injury sustained during training slowed Ady down to a walk. But in much pain, some 6hrs 46 minutes later, he crossed the finishing line. Congratulations to Ady, and donations to his chosen charity Asthma UK can still be made at: www.justgiving.com/ady.

Selling MX-5 bits?

■ THE Eastern Region "For Sale" book is now available to view at the monthly meetings. If you've got any MX-5 related items to sell, bring along the details on an A4 sheet of paper.

ER to go on tour

■ WHILE the plan is to carry on with the regular monthly meeting at the Manger pub near Bury St Edmunds, on the first Wednesday of the month, there has been some interest in setting up alternative mid-monthly meetings to try and reach some of the other parts of the Region. At the moment, Cambridgeshire and Norfolk venues are being sought. A provisional date of Wednesday, 14 June has been agreed for a Norfolk meeting, probably in the Norwich area, so if you are interested in coming along then put it in your diary and watch our website for details shortly.

Rainy days and Sundays



■ Above, Club members brave the drizzle during a break by the River Stour at Mistley and left, one of many of the flooded lanes we had to negotiate in deepest, darkest Essex.



ER EVENT

EASTERN REGION NORTH ESSEX RUN

SUNDAY, MAY 7, 2006

■ THE forecast was for rain and that's exactly what we got.

At the start point, sheltering inside Underwoods Mazda dealership in Colchester, I wondered who'd come out on a day like this? There was no need to worry as 23 cars eventually assembled for our tour of Essex.

The first part of the route took us through the beautiful landscapes of Constable country to Mistley, but due to a small navigational error the back half of the convoy arrived several minutes ahead of the front.

At this point the rain had eased enough for roofs to be dropped for the next stage of the run. The route through to Dovercourt was successfully navigated by everyone, but not without risking several sections of severely flooded roads.

A stop on the seafront at Dovercourt was next, to admire the fine Victorian lighthouses. It also saw most, but not all, put the roofs back up as the rain came down again.

The plan was to picnic on the cliff top at Walton-on-the-Naze, and on arrival this looked unlikely, but with the help of a few umbrellas and the official club gazebo a slightly soggy lunch went ahead.

The last section of the run was via Clacton-on-Sea back inland to Great Bentley where our final stop was the village green, which our route notes informed us "is the biggest village green in England". There was plenty of space to park in any case.

So after another eventful and very successful Eastern Region run, we all headed home but we will be back for a rerun in the sun.



■ An umbrella was this year's must-have fashion accessory for the Essex run.

Rain stopped play for rally kart GP

ER MOTORSPORT

OFF-ROAD KARTING
SUNDAY, APRIL 23, 2006



■ THERE should be a full write-up here, with tales of the spills, thrills and details of the victorious driver in the third Eastern Region Off Road Karting Grand Prix.

However (and I have to mention the weather again, sorry) the elements were against us.

The rain fell, the track turned to mud and with visibility through visors nil (see above), there was no choice but to abandon the racing.

Everyone had at least one race and while we did not have an outright winner we certainly had load of laughs.

Looking ahead

■ SO far the Eastern Region 2006 events have seen quite a lot of new faces this year, and I hope to see lots more over the coming months.

Further details of all the following will be posted on the websites, forum, and sent out via e-mail as they become available. Any questions please contact Martin.

NORFOLK NAVIGATION DRIVE

SUNDAY, JUNE 11

■ THIS is likely to be a run without a map, using 'Tulip' navigation notes (these are similar to rally pace notes and utilise simple symbols for directions) just to make it a bit different. Check website for details.

LAKE DISTRICT WEEKEND

SATURDAY/SUNDAY, JUNE 24/25

■ THE camping is now fully booked, but those of you who want to find your own accommodation are still welcome to join us.

GOODWOOD FESTIVAL OF SPEED

FRIDAY, JULY 7

■ NO firm plans yet, but there is likely to be an ER convoy to the festival on the Friday. Let me know if you are interested, as we will need to get tickets asap.

SUFFOLK PUB HUNT

SUNDAY, JULY 16

■ FOLLOWING on from last year's successful 'pub hunt' we are doing it again this year in mid Suffolk. There will be lots of pubs to find, and loads of nice quiet country roads in between.

National events

CURBOROUGH SPRINT

STAFFORDSHIRE - SATURDAY, JUNE 3

■ OWNERS club motor sports event, see www.mx5oc.co.uk for details. Several Eastern Region members are planning to attend, both to drive and to spectate.

JAE - PETERBOROUGH

SATURDAY/SUNDAY, JULY 23/25

■ The annual meet for most of the Japanese car clubs in the UK will once more see the MX-5 Owners Club in attendance, and hopefully we can again help fill the stand with Eastern Region 5s.

Oh we do like to be beside the seaside...

ER EVENT

EASTERN REGION EASTER RUN (SUFFOLK)

SUNDAY, APRIL 9, 2006

■ ONCE again Beacon Hill Services was chosen as the starting point for an Eastern Region event as we gathered for our first local drive of 2006.

The plan was to head down to Felixstowe for a stroll on the promenade, normally a journey of about 20 miles, but I had decided on a slightly less direct route of around 90 miles!

Almost on time, 23 roadsters headed off into the Suffolk countryside.

Just to get members wondering what they had let themselves in for, the first part of the route was along the ever-so-exciting A140 heading towards Norwich including the opportunity to drive past a thankfully rare site in Suffolk... a speed camera! We soon turned off the uninspiring trunk road and hit the twisties.

There were 26 cars by the time we got to our first stop at



■ Above and left: Just some of the 23 MX-5 that took part on the run.



Dunwich, and after a short break and some essential maintenance to remove a dead blackbird from a radiator, we headed off again. The second part of the route took us along the coast through picturesque Thorpness and Aldeburgh, then back inland via Snape and Tunstall Forest.

Passing through Woodbridge and Martlesham we eventually

arrived in Felixstowe.

The Eastern Region then 'cruised' the length of the seafront and after a bit of bonnet lifting and chat most of us headed off in search of a meal of fish and chips on the prom.

Perhaps I'm tempting fate but I think we're getting the hang of this 'drive' thing now, as we all seemed to end up in the right place at the right time - despite half the convoy taking a sneaky short cut somewhere near Dennington!

Members get the ride of their lives on motor museum visit

ER DAY OUT

GAYDON HERITAGE MOTOR CENTRE

SUNDAY, MARCH 6, 2006

■ ON yet another chilly Sunday morning we met at Beacon Hill Services at 7.30am for a day trip to the Heritage Motor Centre at Gaydon in Warwickshire. Seven 5s left Ipswich, picking up six more en route before arriving at the museum.

Club members from the local West Midlands group, and the not-so-local North East Midlands area met us at the

venue creating a total turn out of 31 MX-5s.

Gaydon focuses on the history of the British Car Industry, (remember that!) with familiar favourites including Minis, MGs, Rovers, Aston Martins, Rolls Royce and very early Lotus 7s.

Undeniably the talking point of the day revolved around the true white-knuckle ride that is the centre's Land Rover experience.

Strapped into a Defender 4x4, we were dumbfounded as to how it managed to stay on its wheels, as it was skilfully put through its paces on a terrifying test track. Hanging on for



■ Eastern Region members try an early people carrier for size at Gaydon

dear life we were driven up near vertical slopes and through deep water-filled ditches, leaning over at unbelievable angles. We all agreed it was worth the trip just for that!

We're here to help

■ The new Eastern Region Technical helpline in association with Priory Fives for all your MX-5 and Roadster technical queries. E-mail: prioryfives@mx5easternregion.co.uk